

Violent Crimes

Homicides, Assaults and Threats

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service is committed to ensuring employee safety in the workplace. Postal Inspectors reported 799 postal-related assaults and credible threats during FY 2001 and made 378 arrests. Inspectors seek prosecution in assault cases when appropriate.

Following are examples of investigations by Postal Inspectors during FY 2001.



Increased attention by Postal Inspectors and Postal Service Threat Assessment Teams has resulted in a dramatic reduction of postal-related assaults and credible threats.

◆ A man was sentenced on March 26, 2001, to five life terms without parole and an additional 110 years in prison for murdering a letter carrier in Chatsworth, CA, and shooting other individuals on August 10, 1999, at a Jewish Community Center in Granada Hills. He was sentenced to serve two consecutive terms of life in prison and ordered to pay \$690,294 in restitution.

◆ A New York man was sentenced in February 2001 to 16 years in prison for the aggravated assault of a Postal Police Officer. Postal Inspectors determined the officer had been performing routine perimeter patrol at the Morgan General Mail Facility on June 2, 2000, when he was suddenly struck on the head, without warning or provocation, by a man wielding a 24-inch steel pipe. He suffered multiple skull fractures and has been unable to return to work despite intensive physical therapy.

◆ A Mississippi man pled guilty in June 2001 to a carjacking that resulted in the death of a postal employee. Postal Inspectors determined he had carjacked a Bailey, MS, rural letter carrier while she was delivering mail on her route. Sentencing was scheduled after the man had testified against a second suspect in September 2001.

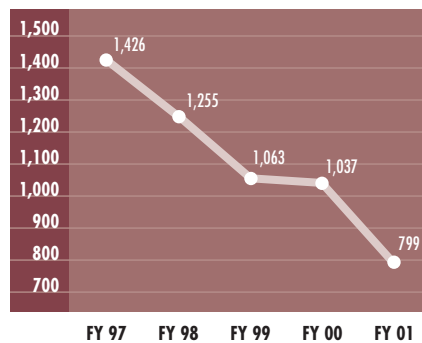
◆ A Philadelphia man was sentenced in November 2000 to 14 years and six months in prison for shooting a city carrier in Prospect Park, PA. Postal

Inspectors alleged he struck and critically wounded the carrier with a high-powered rifle as she delivered mail on her route. The man was ordered to pay restitution of \$261,054 to the Postal Service to cover workers' compensation payments and medical expenses incurred due to the carrier's disabling injuries.

◆ After an investigation by Postal Inspectors in Tennessee, two men were indicted in May 2001 on charges of conspiracy to kidnap, kidnapping, carjacking, assault, obstruction of justice, wielding a firearm and aiding and abetting. The charges stem from the May 1 kidnapping and rape of a postmaster. The men were arrested by Postal Inspectors on June 11, and a trial date of October 24 was scheduled.

◆ The estranged husband of a full-time postal distribution clerk in

Assaults & Threats: Five-Year Trend



California took his own life on June 16, 2001, after shooting his wife multiple times while she was on duty at the East Stockton Station. The clerk is still recovering from her wounds. An investigation by Postal Inspectors disclosed she was in the process of obtaining a restraining order against her husband after nullifying a previous order.

◆ Following a competency hearing on September 5, 2001, a New Jersey man was found not guilty by reason of insanity for his assault of a Bergenfield, NJ, letter carrier. The carrier was intentionally hit by the defendant's car on January 31, 2001, and was then stabbed in the back. He suffered a broken leg and stab wounds, but returned to limited duty in late February 2001 and to full duty in May. His attacker was diagnosed as paranoid schizophrenic and determined insane at the time of the assault. He was ordered committed to a mental institution for long-term psychiatric treatment and hospitalized until deemed no longer a danger to himself or others.

The Postal Inspection Service

works in partnership with postal managers and employee groups to identify incidents that can be dissipated through early interventions and to support other efforts to prevent violence in the workplace. As a result of these efforts, assaults and credible threats have continued to decline.

Mail Bombs and Other Prohibited Mail

Mail Bombs

Historically, the motives for mail bombs and bomb threats often have related to personal and business disputes, with revenge being the common thread. In the interest of protecting postal employees and customers, the Postal Inspection Service considers the investigation of mail bombs among its highest priorities. In FY 2001, Postal

Mail Bomb Incidents: Five-Year Trend

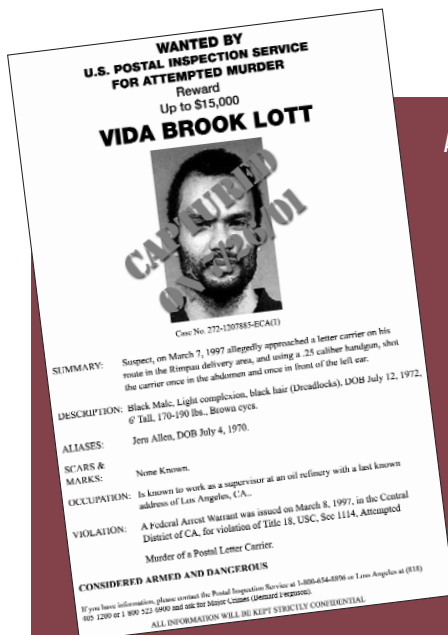
	FY 97	FY 98	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01
Incidents	18	7	6	7	3
Explosions	1	3	2	4	3
Injuries	1	3	0	2	2
Deaths	0	1	0	0	1

Inspectors arrested 53 suspects in incidents related to mail bombs or bomb threats, including threats made against postal facilities, hoax devices, suspicious items in the mail and bombs or explosive devices that were placed in private mail receptacles. Postal Inspectors reported three mail bomb incidents during the past fiscal year.

Examples of mail bomb incidents investigated by Postal Inspectors during FY 2001 follow.

◆ A man in Portland, ME, was sentenced on October 17, 2000, to five years in prison for mailing a bomb threat to the Cape Neddick postmaster. An anonymous letter warned the postmaster that a student was going to place pipe bombs at the post office and a school; it named the student and included a map showing where the bombs could be found. Local police located the bombs and rendered them safe. Analysts at the Postal Inspection Service's Forensic Laboratory identified the suspect, who had allegedly raped a 12-year-old student that year and created the scheme to discredit her in the upcoming trial.

◆ An Oregon man was sentenced on February 8, 2001, to four months of home detention on a tracking bracelet, five years' supervised release, restitution to the Postal Service of \$1,280 and mental health counseling. Additional conditions specified he take certain medications, could not possess a firearm and could not drink alcohol or frequent locations where it is served. The man was suffering from mental problems



After a four-year search, Postal Inspectors in Southern California arrested a federal fugitive on July 26, 2001, for the attempted murder of a letter carrier in March 1997. The carrier, who was delivering mail on his route in South Manhattan Place in Los Angeles, was shot in the neck and torso with a .25-caliber handgun. A search for the suspect led Inspectors to several states, including Georgia, Texas, Minnesota and Washington. The case was featured on "America's Most Wanted" in August 2000, but the man remained a fugitive until Inspectors arrested him at a car dealership in Hollywood, CA, where he was working under an assumed name. The

maximum penalty for the crime is up to 20 years in prison, plus an additional penalty for using a firearm in the commission of a violent crime.

when he constructed an improvised bomb device and placed it at the Klamath Falls Post Office on December 30, 1999. Postal Inspectors responded to the scene, and the local bomb squad rendered the device safe.

◆ Postal Inspectors and FBI agents arrested a man on July 18, 2001, who was responsible for preparing and mailing two mail bombs. The first parcel was addressed to his wife at her place of work in Atlanta. When she opened the package at 9:50 a.m. in the company mailroom, the bomb failed to completely explode and she received only minor burns. Because she was in the process of a bitter divorce, Postal Inspectors focused on her husband as the prime suspect. Inspectors determined he had been in Atlanta, GA, the previous week-end and had stayed with his father. The father consented to a search of his home

and business, where Inspectors and agents found batteries, wiring, boxes and packaging materials similar to the failed pipe bomb. On July 18, 2001, a second mail bomb was mailed to an office in Lawrenceville, GA. It only partially detonated and did not injure anyone. The husband is accused of mailing both bombs, the second one as a decoy.

Other Prohibited Mail

◆ Fourteen letters, all appearing to come from the same person and containing an anthrax virus threat, were delivered in Orlando, FL, between February 5 and 7, 2001. An investigation by FBI agents, the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, Orlando Florida Police and Florida Department of Law Enforcement Agents is continuing. Another anthrax threat was mailed to



An 18-year-old college student was killed by a mail bomb on February 10, 2001, after receiving a package delivered to his San Jose, CA, home in the second week of January 2001. His parents gave him the package, which had been delivered before his visit home from college. The parcel contained a robotic toy dog, which exploded when he inserted batteries as instructed by an accompanying letter. Postal Inspectors and San Jose police responded to the scene, and a task force of Inspectors and local authorities

was formed. Their investigation resulted in the indictment of two men on May 1, 2001, on three counts related to mailing an explosive device.

Photos by Robert J. Campbell, U.S. Postal Inspection Service

1861

Special Agents establish and maintain military post offices and routes during the Civil War.

1872

Congress enacts the Mail Fraud Statute to combat a post-Civil War outbreak of swindles using the mail.

1873

The Postal Obscenity Statute is enacted by Congress, based on the urging of Special Agent Anthony Comstock.



1880

Special Agents become known as "Post Office Inspectors" by Act of Congress.

1881

Post Office Inspectors interview Billy the Kid in connection with a mail robbery in Santa Fe, NM.

1908

In Clinton, MS, Inspector Charles Fitzgerald is the first Post Office Inspector killed in the line of duty.



1916

The last known stagecoach robbery in the United States is solved by Post Office Inspectors, who apprehend the bandits within five days of the crime.

19 people in Sanford, FL, from February 28 through March 1, 2001; all appear to have been prepared by the same person and have fictitious return addresses. The investigation is continuing. Yet another anthrax threat was mailed to the Longwood Police Department on June 18, 2001, in Seminole County. The envelope contained a brown, powdered substance with an odor similar to the smell of curry. A note inside read: "This envelope contains anthrax, go to the hospital or die." Preliminary lab results indicated the powder did not contain anthrax or any other harmful substance. An investigation by Postal Inspectors, FBI agents and the Seminole County Sheriff's Office is continuing.

◆ Two ranchers in rural Osceola County, FL, received letters in April 2001 claiming the paper on which the letters were written was infected with hoof-and-mouth disease. Each bore a return address of Lawson Cattle Equipment, Inc. in Kissimmee, FL. A

note inside read: "This piece of paper has now entered the United States of America. Compliments of P.E.T.A." An investigation by Postal Inspectors, FBI agents, agents from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Osceola County Sheriff's Office is continuing.

◆ A San Diego man was sentenced on June 11, 2001, to three years in prison for hate crimes after pleading guilty in March to three counts of federal civil rights charges

that included harassing four civic leaders with anti-Semitic propaganda and defacing a synagogue. As part of the plea agreement, he was required to meet privately with and apologize to his victims. He admitted leaving threatening messages at the homes and offices of his victims, as well as racist propaganda and a gift box containing a dummy grenade. He has been held in isolation at the Metropolitan Correctional Center since his arrest by Postal Inspectors on November 9, 2000.

◆ Postal Inspectors investigated a Pittsburgh

man who was sentenced to two years' probation in January 2001 for wire-tapping, harassment and other charges related to the mailing of anonymous, threatening letters to his former fiancée at her office at U.S. Airways World Headquarters. The letters accused her of soliciting airline passengers for sex. He had secretly videotaped himself and his ex-fiancée having sex and mailed the tapes to her office, stating they were evidence of a sexual encounter for money.

Robberies and Burglaries


Robberies

Robberies are a threat to postal employees, jeopardize the public's trust in the mail and attack the financial integrity of the Postal Service. Postal Inspectors in all parts of the country receive expert training on how to safeguard both employees and facilities against criminals, but the U.S. Mail will likely always remain a compelling target for larceny.

Thieves who attack letter carriers seek mail containing valuables—such as jewelry, checks or financial information—or keys to mail receptacles that give them greater access to even more mail; those who target postal facilities are usually after cash and money orders. Postal Inspectors also investigate rob-


From 1997 through 1998, several post office robberies in the San Francisco Bay area involved a similar use of guns and physical force on customers and employees. In each case, blank postal money orders were the main target. After another post office was robbed and a money order imprinter was taken in April 1998, Postal Inspectors formed a task force for a more intensive investigation, eventually arresting 17 suspects for possessing and negotiating the stolen






SPECIAL REWARD

Up to \$1 million



For information leading to the arrest and conviction of the individual(s) responsible for the mailing of letters containing anthrax to Tom Brokaw at NBC and Senator Tom Daschle:



The mailings took place in the Trenton, NJ, area on or about Sept. 18 and Oct. 9, 2001.
Anyone having information, please contact America's Most Wanted at 1-800-CRIME TV or www.amw.com.

All information will be held in strict confidence. Reward payment will be made in accordance with the conditions of Postal Service Reward Notice 296, dated February 2000.

money orders. The suspects later received sentences ranging from six months to two years in prison. During his trial, the leader of the ring attempted to have a key witness in the case killed, but Postal Inspectors were able to stop the “hit” just in time. On June 19, 2001, the ringleader was charged with robbing the post offices and witness tampering, and now faces a possible 32 years in federal prison—25 years for armed robbery and seven years for tampering.



beries of postal remittances and trucks (as well as “highway contract route” trucks) that transport valuable registered mail. This type of robbery often depends on the “inside” knowledge of a postal employee, who can provide important details to an accomplice on truck arrivals and departures.

Statistics for robberies that occurred in the past two fiscal years are shown in the chart below, and five-year robbery trends are depicted in the graph above.

Following are summaries of robberies investigated by Postal Inspectors in FY 2001.

◆ An investigation by Postal Inspectors in Massachusetts resulted in a sentence of life imprisonment without parole for a man who robbed a postal

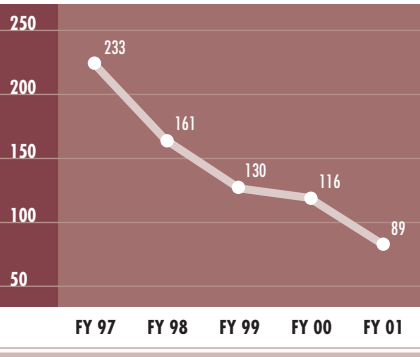
facility. The October 2000 sentence was based on the federal “three strikes” law that mandates life imprisonment for

career criminals who commit a federal crime of violence and have two or more other convictions for serious felonies. His sentence follows two previous convictions—he robbed a letter carrier in June 1995 and

attempted to murder a witness to that robbery in July 1995.

◆ A North Carolina man was sentenced on February 9, 2001, for the May 2000 armed robbery of the Biscoe, NC Post Office. He was ordered to serve 85 months in prison and three years of supervised release, and must pay \$3,250 in restitution to the Postal Service, which will be secured through

Robberies: Five-Year Trend



Robberies	Facility		Carrier		Other		TOTAL	
	FY 00	FY 01	FY 00	FY 01	FY 00	FY 01	FY 00	FY 01
with physical injury	5	3	2	5	5	1	12	9
without physical injury	56	41	31	20	17	19	104	80
TOTAL	61	44	33	25	22	20	116	89

1925

Inspectors armed with Tommy guns quell heavy outbreak of train robberies and post office holdups.



1926

Post Office Inspectors successfully conclude a 3½-year, worldwide manhunt for three train bandits known as the D’Autremont



brothers. The brothers killed four men and blew up a mail car, which they thought was carrying half a million dollars in gold.

1934

When the nation’s \$15.5 billion gold reserve is transferred from New York to Fort Knox, Post Office Inspectors plan the movement and protection of the bullion, which was sent by registered mail. The transfer required 500 rail cars, took several years and was completed without a mishap.



1940

The first of five Postal Inspection Service forensic laboratories is established.

1941

Post Office Inspectors organized the mail system for the military during World War II. The system is so efficient that even front-line troops expect mail delivery as normal procedure.

the Inmate Financial Responsibility Act. The court also ordered him to complete a drug treatment program while incarcerated.

◆ Postal Inspectors apprehended a man who tried to rob the Skokie, IL Post Office on December 22, 2000, resulting in a six-year prison sentence that began in March 2001. Because his previous criminal history included convictions for rape and deviant sexual assault, this latest offense was rated a “Class X Felony.” In Illinois, such felons are not eligible for parole or early release and must serve their entire sentences.

◆ The post office at Schodack Landing, NY, was robbed at gunpoint in July 2000. The robber tied the hands and feet of the postmaster and left him at the rear of the office, fleeing with \$2,000 in postal money orders and \$44 in cash, as well as the postmaster’s wallet. He was apprehended that same month while attempting a burglary in Albany, NY, and pled guilty in September. On June 28, 2001, he was sentenced to 15 years and eight months’ imprisonment and five years of super-

vised release, and was ordered to pay \$2,000 in restitution to the Postal Service.

Burglaries

The Postal Inspection Service continues to see a significant decrease in the number of postal burglaries occurring over the past five years, although a few problems remain in rural areas of the country.

About 81 percent of the burglaries in FY 2001 resulted in losses of less than \$1,000; in the case of stolen postal money orders, fewer than 100 were taken. The graph at right depicts postal burglary trends over the past five years.

Following are examples of burglaries investigated by Postal Inspectors in FY 2001.

◆ A man in North Carolina was

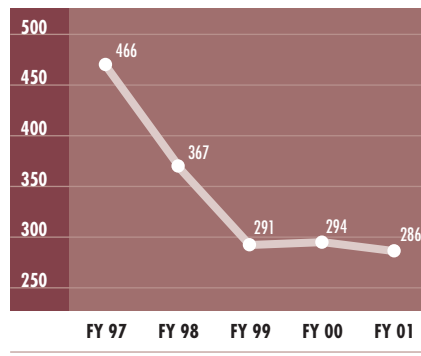
sentenced to 10 months in prison and three years of supervised release in January 2001 after Postal Inspectors proved he burglarized the Wingate, NC Post Office in September 2000. He was ordered to pay the Postal Service \$750 in restitution and receive mental health treatment after serving his prison term.

◆ On January 9, 2001, an Ohio man was sentenced to one year in prison and three years of supervised release, with restitution to the Postal Service of \$5,938 for the burglary of the East Rochester, OH Post Office on January 24, 2000.

◆ From January 25 through February 24, 2000, five post offices

were burglarized in Lake County, CA. Each office was entered the same way, and in each case stamps and cash were stolen by destroying the vending machines. Postal Inspectors identified three suspects in the case, and state arrest warrants were prepared. One man cooperated with Postal Inspectors and pled to lesser charges. In July 2001, the other two men were each sentenced to serve three years in a state correctional institution.

Burglaries: Five-Year Trend



Chief Postal Inspector Kenneth Weaver honored five Baltimore letter carriers in a ceremony held in August 2001 at the Raspeburg, MD Post Office. The carriers were victims of a series of armed robberies that occurred as they delivered mail on their routes. The Chief Postal Inspector presented them with certificates of appreciation for their courage and dedication to duty. With the assistance of the carriers, Postal Inspectors and local police apprehended and arrested two suspects for the crimes.